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"Suppose the house had gone, and the hotel stood fast, could you have effected an entrance into the hotel?" I asked.

"We could not have faced the gale."

"Not for a hundred feet? not in a matter of life and death?"

"Impossible. The wind would have lifted us from our feet like bags of wool. We would have been dashed against the rocks, and smashed like egg-shells," was the quiet reply.

"And so for some hours you expected to be swept into eternity?"

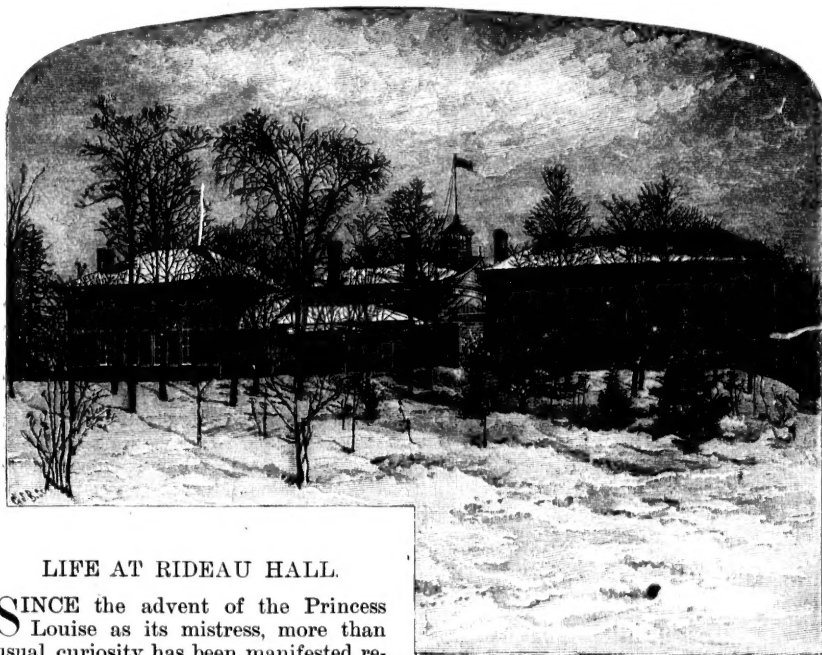
"We did what we could. Each

wrapped himself in blankets and quilts, binding these tightly around him with ropes, to which were attached bars of iron, so that if the house went by the board, we might stand a chance—a slim one—of anchoring somewhere, somehow."

Somewhere, indeed!

When, on the following morning, I busied myself getting ready to go down the mountain, I heard a profound sigh, followed by some half-audible words, proceeding from the adjoining room. These words rang in my ears all that day:

"Ah, this horrible solitude!"



GOVERNMENT HOUSE, OTTAWA—WINTER SCENE.

#### LIFE AT RIDEAU HALL.

SINCE the advent of the Princess Louise as its mistress, more than usual curiosity has been manifested regarding the life at Rideau Hall, the "White House" of Canada. Before that time, if it was thought of at all, it was only as the Government House; but since a Princess dwells there, a new interest attaches itself to the place, and it is not strange if every little American "sovereign in her own right" should exercise her national prerogative, and ask all the questions she likes about "court life" at Ottawa. Much of this curiosity has already been satisfied, for from the day the Marquis of Lorne and his royal wife landed upon Canadian soil, very little of the

slightest interest concerning them has passed unnoted by the press.

So popular were their predecessors, Lord and Lady Dufferin, that the places which they left were difficult to fill. Indeed, I am sure there are people in Canada to-day who believe that they took their places with them, instead of leaving them to be filled. The Marquis and Marchioness of Lorne took the wisest and easiest way—they retained their individuality, and created new places for themselves.



HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

So unaffected is the life at Rideau Hall that it shows almost a republican simplicity when compared with the ceremony and parade kept up in many of the great country houses in England. No court etiquette is observed, and only the rules of good manners are adhered to. It is the very evident desire of the Governor-General and Princess to make all those who enter their home feel welcome and at their ease. The public sees very little beyond the usual formalities surrounding the two chief personages of the Dominion. Their home life is jealously guarded from the world.

I often think, when I see the flag which always floats over Rideau Hall when the Princess is there, what a change has come into her life. "Piccadilly and green pastures"—London and Ottawa. Brilliancy, art, culture, and caste—and a crude little city, struggling in the chaos of newness and the doubt of permanency. And I fall to wondering what her feelings were that bleak November day, when she drove, just at night-fall, under the dripping and leafless trees, up to the door of Rideau Hall. Velvet lawns had been exchanged for a soaked meadow turf, and a palace for a comfortable, roomy, old-fash-

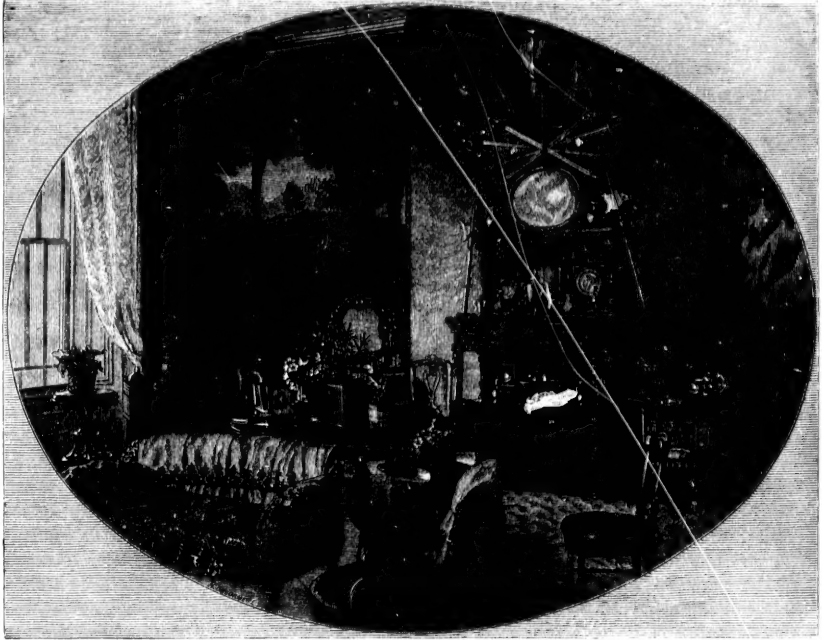
ioned home. The life she was leaving behind her had filled her æsthetic nature, and the one to which she was coming could only have as its greatest merit, in her eyes, novelty.

It would not be very strange if she were not happy here, for if we look back over the two years she has spent with us, enough has happened to associate sorrow with Canada. The death of her favorite sister, the Princess Alice, which followed closely her coming, filled the first months of her stay with grief. Of course she was surrounded with an atmosphere of sympathy, but, after all, she was separated from those who felt the grief in all its bitterness with her. But even this was only allowed to very briefly interrupt the gayeties at the Government House. She assumed these duties, and bravely performed them in spite of the mourning of which her face attested the sincerity. Then came the shocking accident which almost cost her her life, and which has left her in a state against which a continual struggle must be made to prevent her sinking into confirmed invalidism. Of late she has been trying the effect of travel. During her absence Lord Lorne has to a great extent supported her rôle as

well as his own, and during the winter just passed society has not wanted for entertainment at the Hall.

Royalty is so hedged in by etiquette, that you can only approach it through certain openings, and in Ottawa, as elsewhere, these openings do not frequently occur. Since her Royal Highness has presided at Rideau Hall, even that society which the popular voice calls "the best,"

The hospitalities of Rideau Hall which are extended to the general public may be enjoyed by observing the following rules. In Ottawa the political, judiciary, military, and clerical dignitaries have official precedence, while, under the head of "prominent citizens," clergymen, lawyers, doctors, bankers, and heads of large business firms, lumbering and mining interests, take rank with the officers of the civil



THE DRAWING-ROOM, RIDEAU HALL.

has not had as free access there as formerly. In Lady Dufferin's time the doors swung open easily and often. Of course then, as now, there was always the intimate circle of friends. This, Lady Dufferin chose from Ottawa society. Now it is chosen from England, and comprises the ladies of her household and transient guests. These, almost without an exception, have been artists. Amongst these has been the gifted Miss Montalba, who is making such an enviable reputation in England, and, indeed, throughout Europe. She left as a souvenir of her visit a bust of Lord Lorne, which is strong and masterly. It has been put into bronze, and now stands in the main corridor.

service in society, and amongst these the chiefs of departments take the lead.

To enjoy the hospitalities of Rideau Hall—that is, to get your name upon the lists—you must go and register your name in one book for the Princess Louise, and in another for the Governor-General, and you will do well to leave a separate card for each lady and gentleman making up the Governor's family. In acknowledgment of this civility, you will have your call returned by card by those for whom you have left yours, and from the Marquis and Marchioness of Lorne you will receive invitations to the various entertainments as they occur.

These entertainments have one peculiar

ilarity which would impress an American observer: they are nearly all out-of-doors, perchance lawn tennis inaugurating the season. Some softly bright October day, such as comes in perfection in our Northern climate, the gardens and lawns surrounding the Hall are brilliant with gay people in afternoon dress. Even the usu-

bluff which overhangs the Ottawa River. Nearer, the fringe of trees bordering the grounds, and looking like a procession with triumphal banners floating in the hazy atmosphere. Beneath these, across the lawn, and amid the richest and last floral offering of summer, promenaded the guests. The band of the Governor-Gen-



PRINCESS LOUISE, MARCHIONESS OF LORNE.

al gloom of male attire does not stand out *en bloc*, as it is broken into by the uniforms of the Governor's aides-de-camp, which gleam here and there through the crowd. At such a time, and upon such a day, I can imagine with what delight an artist—Raimond de Madrazo, for instance—would study the scene. Detail and accessories are all there. Imagine this: Vaguely showing through the autumnal glow, over a mile away, is the background formed by the beautiful pile of government buildings resting upon the bold

eral's Foot-Guards is stationed near the house, and their red coats and flashing instruments harmonize with the whole. On the broad gallery stand groups of visitors, while through the open windows you see a few irrepressible dancers in the parlor.

After it is too late for lawn tennis and croquet, the skating and toboggan parties come, and at these young Canada is in its element. Then the daring of Canadian attire reaches its climax. No color is too brilliant and no garment too fantastic to



THE MARQUIS OF LORNE.

be worn. The toboggan slide and vicinity fairly blossoms with the merry, romping company. Surplus dignity is thrown to the winds, along with streamers of ribbons, tassels, and bright-hued scarfs. A pretty Canadian girl never looks prettier than when clad in her cloak made of a fleecy white blanket (its gay border carefully reserved as a trimming), a red or blue *tuque* perched coquettishly upon her abundant hair, its saucy-looking tassel bobbing about at its own sweet will, and a bright-colored skirt just showing between her cloak and moccasined feet. Put now a toboggan and two or three beaux at her disposal, and she is happy. She will slide all afternoon, leaving, per-

haps, just a margin for a skim over the ice, and then scamper into the house, replace her moccasins, or skating boots, with slippers, throw aside her cloak, and dance until the stern law of etiquette, or the equally stern command of her chaperon, who, although kind and discreet as a chaperon should be, feels at last the *ennui* and the interest in the approaching dinner hour natural to her age. These afternoon parties never last later than six o'clock, and a few minutes before that time the last guest is usually gone.

"And does the Princess Louise take part in these sliding parties?"

Yes, to a certain extent, though, know-

ing her character, you can readily understand that she only does so *à la princesse*. I have never seen her guide her own toboggan, a feat seemingly easy enough of accomplishment when you see it done by a Canadian girl, but which, after a trial or two, the lately arrived Briton or American is very shy of undertaking.

Lately there has been built a little log-cabin under the tall natural growth of pines, well off to one side of the Hall. It overlooks the skating rink, and is divided into two rooms, into which the skaters can retire for rest, warmth, or preparation. It is very comfortable, and doubtless serves the purpose for which it was designed, if that purpose was not picturesqueness. It is so hopelessly unlike the genuine log-cabin that one expects to see a stage peasant step out from its door and soliloquize upon its platform. On this platform chairs are arranged for the Princess and distinguished guests to rest and watch the skaters when they do not care to be of them.

For the amusement of the Governor-General and his gentlemen friends there is a fine curling rink, where the lovers of "the roarin' game" very often congregate. Likewise there is a foot-ball and cricket ground for them; but as this is a pre-eminently feminine piece of literature, I decline to go outside of my province, and so say nothing about the entertainments intended only for gentlemen.

Balls are not of very frequent occurrence, but I can assure those who are interested upon that point, that when they are given, they are "perfectly lovely." You are bidden to one two weeks in advance by a card of impressive dimensions, bearing the monogram of the house, and which reads as follows:

The Aide-de-Camp in waiting is commanded by  
His Excellency  
The Governor-General and Her Royal Highness the  
Princess Louise  
to invite  
Mr. and Mrs. — — —  
to a Ball on — — —  
the — — —, at 9 o'clock.

An answer is requested to the A.D.C. in waiting.

On the appointed night the road to New Edinburgh is lined with sleighs, and by the time the gate is reached, so dense is the crowd of vehicles that the remainder of your drive is likely to occupy more time than did that part of it from the city out. Once inside the Hall, the scene

which greets you is indeed charming. Up and down the stairs, along the brilliantly lighted corridors, into the leafy shade of the conservatory, in and out of the several handsome rooms thrown open for the occasion, throng the elegantly dressed guests. The ball-room is packed to suffocation, and it is a terrible pilgrimage to make to the further end, where the Governor-General and the Princess Louise are receiving their guests. When the dancing begins, the pilgrimage becomes an impossibility, and the only thing left for you to do is to gaze hopelessly in their direction. The dressing at one of these grand balls is elegant, and, as a rule, graceful, but when compared with that seen upon a similar occasion at the White House, for instance, is inexpensive. There are handsome silks, satins, and velvets, and a few costly laces, but very few diamonds are to be seen. As a rule, the ladies are *décollétées*, but there are amongst them a good many who are dressed in "the American fashion," as the high-necked full dress is here described.

The ball-room is a large and handsome apartment, occupying the wing to the left of the entrance. The walls are tinted in a soft dark shade, which shows off a brilliantly dressed company to the best advantage. The wood is finished in white and gold, and the window drapery is crimson. On ball nights the tennis-court, in the wing to the right of the entrance, is used for a supper-room. Its walls and ceilings are lined with red and white bunting to simulate a tent. It, as well as the ball-room, was added in Lord Dufferin's administration, and at his request. About midnight the piper is heard piping along the corridor, and the supper-room is thrown open. Into it the vice-regal party lead the way, followed by five or six hundred of their guests, as only about that number can conveniently be served at once. The vice-regal party sit, and the rest stand.

Dinners are far fewer than formerly, and the diners are chosen rather more exclusively. Of course these dinners are the most ceremonious entertainments which take place. The guests enter the reception-room with the right hand bare, although they are not received by the Princess before dinner. She enters just as dinner is announced, and is escorted to the table by the gentleman who takes rank amongst the guests, the Marquis of-

fering his arm to one of the ladies. If they are thus in company with French Canadians, they enter into conversation in French, as both speak it well and fluently. After dinner, when the company returns to the drawing-room, the Princess passes about amongst her guests, speaking to all. It is not proper to sit when the Princess does not, and whenever she has occasion to rise, the entire company does the same, and remains standing until she is again seated.

that it can easily be converted into a theatre. The platform upon which the musicians have sat for the one occasion is now, by an ingenious contrivance for enlarging it, turned into an exquisitely appointed stage. Of late years Rideau Hall has been fortunate in having within its walls most excellent amateur talent. Lady Dufferin was a most charming actress, and in the present household one of the aides-de-camp has the reputation of being the finest amateur actor in England.

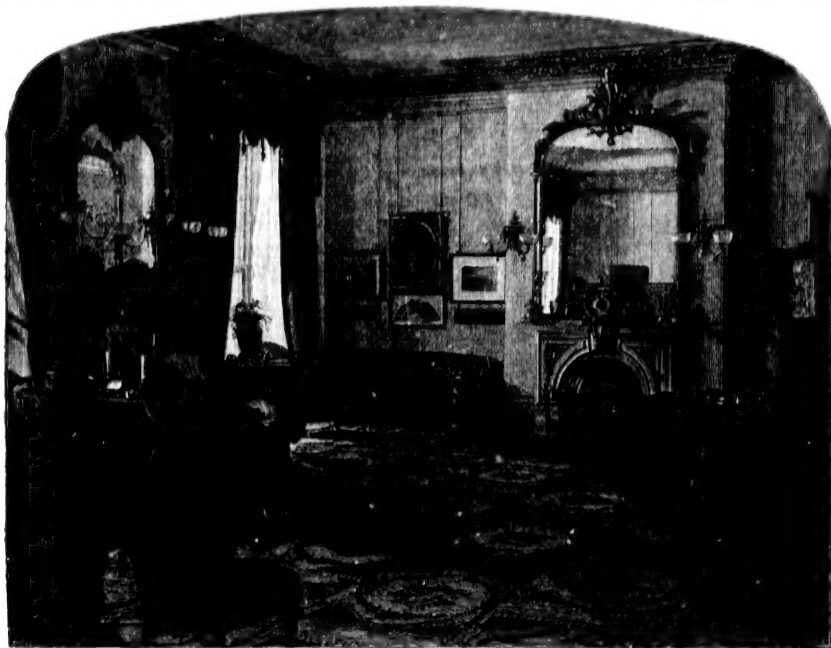


SKATING RINK AND CABIN.

In these days of ceramic achievements it is quite allowable to peep into other people's china closets, so I may say something of the china displayed at Rideau Hall. Much of it is beautiful, but by no means exceptionally rare. Neither is the plate of unusual magnificence, though rich and handsome, and gold enters freely into the furnishing of the table. Of course the family plate of Argyll is not yet inherited, still, so abundant is the supply that it is hardly missed.

Of all the entertainments given at the Government House none are more popular or more enjoyed than the theatricals, and invitations to them are eagerly sought. The ball-room is so constructed

He certainly plays to perfection—that is, non-professional perfection. The ladies and gentlemen taking part in the theatricals are usually from Ottawa, and the Princess does not act. And just here I am reminded to say that the announcement that the Princess has written a play founded upon scenes and amongst the fishermen of Gaspé Bay is quite untrue. No such play has been written, or, at least, not by her Royal Highness. The theatricals are full-dress occasions, and the ball-room on these nights presents a brilliant appearance. The plays are always put upon the stage with all the elegance of which they admit, or taste or money can supply. Flowers are used in profusion,



THE BLUE DRAWING-ROOM, RIDEAU HALL.

and their arrangement calls forth the greatest admiration. New scenery has been painted, under the supervision of the Princess, and altogether the stage is a little gem.

The most public appearance of the Princess in Ottawa society is upon the evening after the opening of Parliament, when she holds a "Drawing-room" in the Senate-chamber. This reception is also a full-dress affair, and whoever wishes may attend. The Governor-General and his wife stand upon the dais at one end of the chamber, and the guests approach and are introduced by one aide-de-camp, who has had the name read to him by another from the card with which each guest is provided. As the name is pronounced, the Princess and Marquis simply bow, unless it should belong to some person of sufficient distinction, when they offer their hands and speak a few words with him. After the introduction the guests pass out by a door to the right of the dais, and so can quit the apartment without turning their backs upon royalty—a thing which is, of course, never done. The "Drawing-room" is usually over by ten o'clock. For-

merly there were afternoon receptions, somewhat similar to those at the White House, which could be attended by any one who wished. These have been discontinued, and all parties are now formed of invited guests. This change is solely owing to the increasing numbers who now yearly come to Ottawa.

Some idea of the number of guests entertained in various ways at Rideau Hall since Lord Lorne has been Governor-General may be gained by the following figures:

|                                                    |      |
|----------------------------------------------------|------|
| At dinner parties in 1879.....                     | 904  |
| "      "      " 1880.....                          | 688  |
| "      "      " 1881.....                          | 627  |
| At balls in 1879.....                              | 1000 |
| "      "      " 1881.....                          | 1600 |
| At "At Homes" each year.....                       | 900  |
| At skating and tobogganing parties, each year..... | 2000 |
| At theatricals, each year.....                     | 1300 |

On New-Year's Day the Governor-General follows the custom of his predecessors in receiving all who come to wish him a happy New Year, and these receptions are quite as informal as those of the President at the White House. He is also always willing to see any one who asks to see

him on business at any time, and so cordial is his manner in these interviews, and so delightful a talker is he, that occasionally his caller loses sight of business in friendly chat.

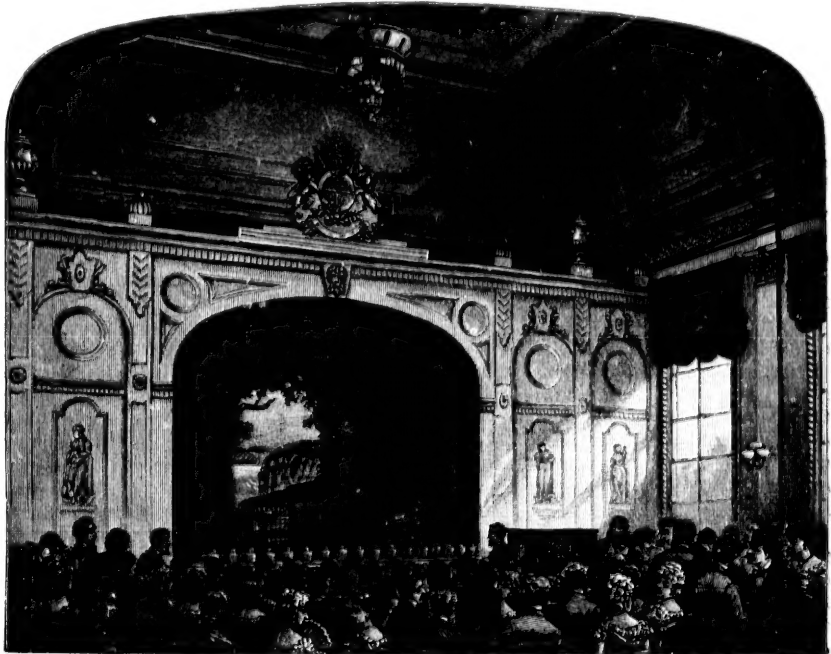
While Parliament is sitting, the Princess often occupies a chair near the Speaker on the floor of the House of Commons, an interested listener to the debate upon some important bill. At such times she offers her hand and chats cordially with those members who approach to speak to her. She is always attended by a lady in waiting and an aide-de-camp.

She is, like so many English women, a good walker and a fair rider, and during her first winter here she could be met almost any day miles away from her home. She "did" much of the vicinity of Ottawa on foot, always *sensibly* shod and dressed, and in slippery weather carrying a cane. Almost invariably she wears a veil. It has been the subject of much comment, and the curious often complain that the public never sees her face. Her reason for wearing it probably lies as much in the fact that she suffers terribly from neuralgia as from any wish to thwart the cu-

rious gaze. Both the Princess and Marquis readily adopted winter sports, and many a merry snow-shoe tramp was organized from the Government House; and when the spring opened, and the rafts from the Upper Ottawa began to come down by hundreds, they enjoyed the grand and exciting fun of running the rapids above the Chaudière Falls, and coming down through the "slides" upon these log rafts.

From this slight glimpse into it you see that Rideau Hall is by no means a Castle of Indolence. The Princess is a busy woman, and her range of duties is a very wide one. Her artistic pursuits are, without doubt, nearest her heart, and you often see her abroad with her sketch-book, filling it with souvenirs of her Canadian home. She has a snug little sketching box, which can be whisked about from place to place as she desires it. Fortunately for one of her artistic nature she lives in a region surrounded by loveliest views, and whichever way the eye turns, it is gladdened by some picture never to be forgotten.

The Princess is a communicant at St. Bartholomew's, the little English church



THEATRICALS IN THE BALL-ROOM.



PRINCESS LOUISE'S SKETCHING BOX.

at New Edinburgh, which stands near the grounds (the rector of which is chaplain for Rideau Hall), while the Marquis of Lorne comes into the city, and is a regular attendant at "the kirk." Her Royal Highness has always taken an active interest in church affairs, and to her the little church is indebted for a fine chime of bells. The children of the Sunday-school are regularly entertained at the Hall with a Christmas tree and party. She visits hospitals, schools, and convents, and carries on all the work of a charitable lady in private life. Much of her good work is done in a quiet, unostentatious manner, which fully carries out the Biblical injunction; but a princess can not hide from the public the work of one hand, even if she can keep it a secret from the other, and so we from time to time catch a glimpse of her true, kind heart.

All of these public duties do not interfere with those of a more domestic character. She, of course, has a small army of servants. There is a *chef*, and an *garçon de chef*, and I would be afraid to say how many more *pour faire la cuisine*; there are maid-servants and men-servants

for each particular kind of work, and a housekeeper to oversee them all. But, in spite of much aid, the Marchioness of Lorne is at the head of her establishment. She does not think it beneath her dignity to go into the laundry and instruct the maids concerning their duties, or to give an occasional eye to the marketing when it is brought in. A story I have just heard about her makes her quite rival in housewifely attainments the queen of good King Stephen, who, from the "peek o' barley meal," concocted that historical pudding so well known to the student of Mother Goose. A friend of mine was lately dining at Rideau Hall, and during the dinner she remarked upon the excellence of the oyster *pâtés* to one of the ladies in waiting to the Princess. "Yes," she replied; "they were made by her Royal Highness."

The immediate household at Government House consists of two or three ladies in waiting and several aides-de-camp. The military secretary and his wife occupy a handsome house near by, where the Princess often calls informally, or takes a five-o'clock "school-room tea" with the secretary's children.

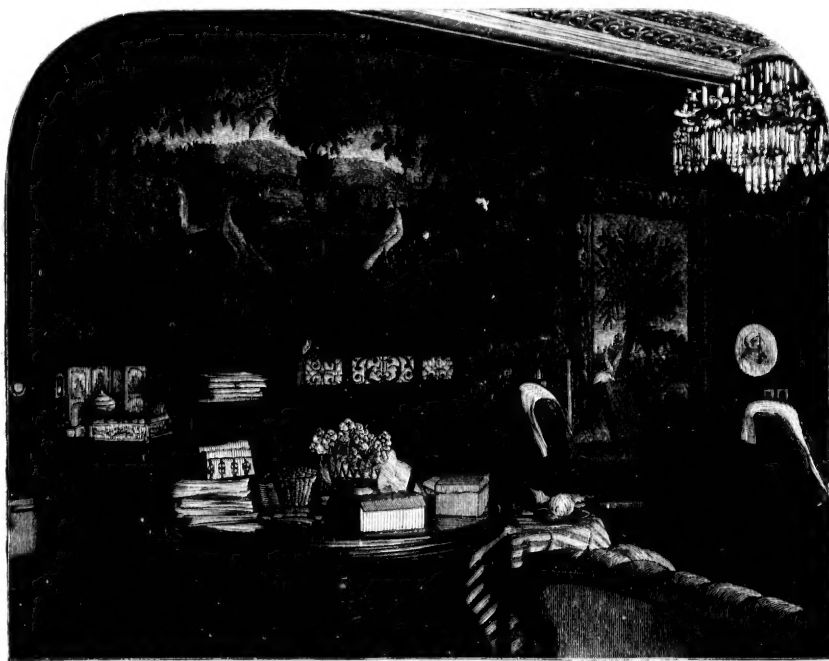
Rideau Hall in every part shows itself to be the home of an artist and a poet. An air of culture and refinement pervades it, and whichever way you turn you are delighted by some pretty conceit, or tasteful fancy successfully carried out. Here are old tapestry hangings, as rich with history and associations as color and skill. Exquisite ornaments are scattered about in profusion, but not with that riotous plenty which simply suggests money. The "blue parlor" is, to my taste, one of the most charming rooms I can recall. It is a large and handsome apartment, and is furnished upon the happy meeting ground of classical severity and elegant luxuriousness. It is essentially feminine in its taste, and you at once say to yourself, "It is the expression of the *artist*." About you you feel much of its presiding genius. Here is a panel of flowers, and here a door decorated by her brush; an unfinished study hangs in one corner, and rare paintings glow upon the walls. Sitting before the bright coal fire on a winter day, you can look out through the warmly draped windows upon a driving snow-storm, or, if you turn slightly, you can look into the fairy-land of flowers, for the conservatory opens from this room.

Next to the blue parlor is the library, a snug and rather surprising library, with none of the conventional solidity of furnishing which one naturally associates with books. It is pretty and simple, in white and green.

With the exception of perhaps these two rooms, the color throughout the Hall is crimson. Perhaps no better could be chosen. It is a stately color, and glows with a perpetual warmth which our long Canadian winters make acceptable.

Louise we knew better as a clever artist than as a princess. So we were prepared, in anticipating their coming, for a more exalted and refined life than Canadian society had yet known, and our anticipations have not been disappointed.

Two years is a short time, but it has been long enough to establish upon a substantial foundation a national academy of arts and several art schools in Canada, and what is, perhaps, still more to the point, to implant a respect for mental su-



PRINCESS LOUISE'S BOUDOIR.

I have only written of that life in which the gay world is interested; but there is another and higher life lived at Rideau Hall, and I doubt if either the Marquis of Lorne or her Royal Highness knows how wide-spread its influence is. Its spirit does more toward awakening a desire for mental improvement than anything else could. Years ago we knew our present Governor-General as a writer who did not have to call his rank to his aid to gain admittance to the literary world, and before him we had learned the character of the house of Argyll. While the Princess

periority in all departments. Like all people who are true to their tastes, and who are happy enough to have the means, they have opened and smoothed ways in which to advance those who are less fortunately placed. They have sent young artists abroad, generously patronized those already before the public, and fostered education in many ways. With this kindly spirit and good work the present Governor-General and his wife will have marked their stay in Canada with a characteristic influence which will be felt for many years to come.